



International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice

ISSN: 0192-4036 (Print) 2157-6475 (Online) Journal homepage: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rcac20>

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To cite this article: Ashmini G. Kerodal, Joshua D. Freilich, Steven M. Chermak & Michael J. Suttmoeller (2015) A test of Sprinzak's split delegitimization's theory of the life course of far-right organizational behavior, *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 39:4, 307-329, DOI: [10.1080/01924036.2014.973053](https://doi.org/10.1080/01924036.2014.973053)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01924036.2014.973053>



Published online: 31 Oct 2014.



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A test of Sprinzak's split delegitimization's theory of the life course of far-right organizational behavior

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This article applies Sprinzak's theory of split delegitimization to the American far-right. We examine a sample of 30 violent and 30 nonviolent far-right groups for each year of their existence, drawn from the Extremist Crime Database, and explore the violent and legal behavioral patterns over their lifecycle. Sprinzak hypothesized that far-right groups undergo a radicalization process through three stages, *conflict of legitimacy*, *crisis of confidence*, and *crisis of legitimacy*. He predicted that terrorism would occur at the peak of group radicalization or during the third stage. Results supported Sprinzak's conceptualization of *conflict of legitimacy* and *crisis of confidence* stages. Groups initially selected nongovernment targets, but after experiencing disillusionment with the ruling regime, they equally attacked government and nongovernment targets. Importantly, prolonged and increasingly violent acts against government targets were not observed.

Keywords: far-right; extremist groups; split-delegitimization; crime; terrorism

This article focuses on the life course of American far-right organizations and explores their violent and legal/political behavioral patterns. We test Sprinzak's (1995) theory of split delegitimization that seeks to explain the evolution of all right-wing organizations. Sprinzak's (1995) theory was based on a comparative analysis of American white supremacist groups, Italian neo-Fascist groups, German neo-Nazi groups, vigilantes of Gush Emunim, and followers of Rabbi Kahane in Israel and AWB paramilitary groups in Africa. Sprinzak (1995) argued that far-right groups are radicalized through a three-step process: *Conflict of Legitimacy*, *Crisis of Confidence*, and *Crisis of Legitimacy*. He claimed that far-right groups initially engage in political activities and crimes against the illegitimate "other," (i.e., members of minority groups and Jews). As the group loses confidence in the government and its policies, political action shifts towards protests, which can lead to unplanned violent altercations with law enforcement (Freilich & Chermak, 2009; Sprinzak, 1995). Both the "other" and government are deemed illegitimate, and far-right groups equally target government and nongovernment actors in the second stage of group radicalization. Finally, during the third stage or the peak of

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radicalization, groups shift their focus to government targets and mass civilian targets (i.e., terrorism).

We build upon Sprinzak's (1995) work, as well as subsequent research by Kaplan (1995), who argued that some aspects of the theory are not applicable to the American far-right. We examine whether the experience of split delegitimization influences the (1) violent behavior of American far-rightist groups, (2) legal/political behavior of American far-rightist groups, and (3) the target selection of violent far-rightist groups. This article compares violent and nonviolent far-right extremist groups and examines factors that may inspire groups to commit or desist from violent behavior.

A complex combination of beliefs contributes to far-right ideology (Bjørge, 1995a; Durham, 1996, 2003; Ezekiel, 1995; Freilich, Chermak, & Caspi, 2009; Kaplan, 1995, 1997; Pedahzur & Canetti-Nisim, 2004). Groups in the movement hold different beliefs – antigovernment, white supremacist, anti-immigration, anti-tax, complex conspiracy theories, and the inviolability of constitutional rights – in various degrees (Aho, 1990; Barkun, 1989, 1996; Blee, 2002; Chermak, 2002; Chermak, Freilich, & Shemtob, 2009; Dobratz & Shanks-Meile, 1996; Freilich, Chermak, & Caspi, 2009; Kimmel & Ferber, 2000).¹ The movement normally considers race, ethnicity, nationality, Golden Age myths, sexual preference, religion, or some combination thereof as the foundation for this inequality (Bjørge, 1995a; Freilich, Chermak, & Caspi, 2009).

While some parts of the movement consider violence an acceptable method to attain its goals, most far-rightists lead law-abiding lives (Aho, 1990; Bjørge, 1995a; Dobratz & Shanks-Meile, 1996). At the group level, similar behavior patterns emerge. Asal and Rethemeyer (2008) examined data from the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism and found that, from 1998 to 2005, 395 terrorist organizations existed, but only 68 killed 10 or more people. American far-rightists display similar offending patterns: only 21% of the far-rightist groups that existed between 1990 and 2008 sampled by Chermak, Freilich, and Suttmoeller (2013) committed at least one violent act per year and less than 10% committed more than six violent acts per year.

Recently, attention has been paid to the radicalization of al Qaeda affiliated groups and nationalist groups in the Middle East. However, right-wing extremism continues to pose a threat (Freilich, Chermak, & Simone, 2009; LaFree, Dugan, Fogg, & Scott, 2006). Far-right groups have committed serious acts of violence in Western Europe (Michael & Minkenberg, 2007; Pedahzur & Canetti-Nisim, 2004), Scandinavia, the Russian Federation (Laryš & Mareš, 2011), Australia, Canada, Israel (Pedahzur & Canetti-Nisim, 2004), and the United States (Chalk, 2007; Chermak et al., 2013). Further, there is a dearth of studies that have attempted to examine offending patterns of the far-right movement with group level data. Importantly, Sprinzak's (1995) split delegitimization theory has not been tested in over 15 years and has never been empirically examined in the American context. Soon after it was set forth, it was empirically tested in several countries, and these studies were published in a special issue of *Terrorism and Political Violence*. This issue also included Sprinzak's introduction of the theory and Kaplan's (1995) critique that questioned its applicability to the American far-right. However, as far as we know, no researcher has attempted to empirically investigate the applicability of the theory to the American far-right movement.²

This article is organized in the following manner. First, we review Sprinzak's (1995) theory of split delegitimization, Kaplan's critique, and the relevant literature on the violent behavior of extremist groups. Second, this study's research design is discussed, and we then outline our results. The article concludes with a discussion of these findings and suggests avenues for future research.

Ehud Sprinzak's (1995) theory of split delegitimization

Sprinzak (1995) described the ideal-typical radicalization trajectory of far-right extremist groups, which he referred to as particularistic terror groups.³ According to Sprinzak (1995, p. 18), “[terrorism is] a behavioral stage in the life history of an extremist movement ... it is not a detached state of mind of crazy misfits but a type of political behavior which evolves (and declines) gradually under certain identifiable psycho-political conditions.” Sprinzak (1995) argued that the radicalization of far-right extremist groups involve a process whereby the groups become increasingly convinced that two entities – the political regime and a subset of the population – are illegitimate. Sprinzak (1995) referred to this process as “split delegitimization.” Although Sprinzak (1995) believed that the process of split delegitimization was not identical for all far-right groups, he asserted that three stages (akin to Weber’s concept of ideal types) usually occur.

Sprinzak (1995) theorized that far-rightist groups usually start the radicalization process at the *Conflict of Legitimacy* stage. Young groups, according to Sprinzak (1995, p. 21), focus on the “other,” usually minority groups that must “be kept in an inferior legal status, expelled or even be eliminated.” Sprinzak (1995) argued that this belief in delegitimacy of the other is rooted in deep-seated social and cultural traditions (Aho, 1990; Blee, 2002; Simi & Futrell, 2010). The hated other may be defined by race, nationality, religion, or sexual orientation – a characteristic that cannot be altered – and makes the subgroup intrinsically inferior and deserving of their status (Crenshaw, 2000; Cronin, 2006; Sprinzak, 1995). Groups at this first stage of radicalization engage in political activities designed to “strengthen and perpetuate existing social and cultural mechanisms of discrimination” (Sprinzak, 1995, p. 21). Sprinzak (1995) argued that during the conflict stage, groups accept the government’s legitimacy, even though they are disillusioned with its policies. Groups seek to accomplish their goals through legitimate political activities. Group violence targeting minorities (i.e., hate crimes), Sprinzak (1995) theorized, would be sporadic and only emerge if the group feels threatened. This violence would be aimed at the illegitimate other, minority groups, rather than the government. That is, the group would engage in hate crimes rather than acts of terrorism, but these hate crimes would be infrequent.

Sprinzak (1995) argued that while the current balance of power is maintained, far-right groups would limit their behavior to preserving the prevailing social and cultural discriminatory systems. However, if there is a shift in the balance of power and the far-right extremist group becomes convinced that the government is not using sufficient energy to protect the interests of legitimate citizens, it will progress to the next stage of radicalization: *Crisis of Confidence*. At this stage, the group loses confidence in the government and its policies. As a result, the far-right extremist group would attempt to restore the status quo by engaging in low level intimidation (e.g., harassment or hate crimes) against the other. Group members may also begin to disobey laws. Political action shifts towards protests, which can lead to unplanned violent altercations with law enforcement. The group may eventually splinter as the members become convinced the leaders are not radical enough.

Sprinzak (1995) argued that if far-right extremist groups become convinced that the government is controlled by the *other*, the split would disappear. This would occur at the *Crisis of Legitimacy* or third stage in the group radicalization process. In addition to the hated minority group, the government would be deemed illegitimate and systematic terrorism would occur. Although Sprinzak (1995) did not believe all far-right extremist groups follow this pattern, he argued that this framework explained the violent behavior of *most* far-right extremist groups. The next section delves deeper into split delegitimization theory and discusses some of the relevant research findings.

Literature review

The effects of group age on far-right groups' violent and legal behavior patterns

Sprinzak (1995) predicted that as far-right groups progress through the three stages, their levels of violence and legal/political behavior will fluctuate. At the *Conflict of Legitimacy* stage, Sprinzak predicted that extremist groups would focus their efforts on maintaining the status quo. That is, on legal/political behaviors to bolster existing socioeconomic-political structures of inequality. At this stage, most extremist groups would not engage in any violent behavior. Furthermore, those groups which engaged in violence would focus their efforts on the hated other, and there would be few or no incidents of terrorism.

Caspi, Freilich, and Chermak (2012) used social network analysis to examine a small sample of far-rightist groups that existed between 1990 and 2008, selected from the Extremist Crime Database violence database.⁴ Contrary to Sprinzak's model, they found that older far-right groups had more connections to other far-right groups, and groups with the most connections tended to be the most violent. Thus, there was an interaction effect between the number of connections by extremist groups and group age, which subsequently increased the risk of group violent behavior. In a subsequent study, Chermak and his colleagues (2013) found that older groups were more likely than younger groups to have members that engaged in violent crime, which they attributed to increases in organizational capacity, funding, and increased membership over time.

However, split delegitimization theory asserted that violent behavior of extremist groups would be cyclical in nature and would fluctuate with (a) the group's level of disillusionment with the political authority and (b) perception of threat from the other (Bjørge, 1995a; Crenshaw, 2000; Cronin, 2006; Sprinzak, 1995). Because Caspi et al. (2012) and Chermak et al. (2013) used cross-sectional research designs, they might have been unable to tease out this more nuanced cyclical relationship. Studies that tested split delegitimization theory in Europe (Merkl, 1995; Willems, 1995) and Scandinavia (Bjørge, 1995b; Löw, 1995) found a wave-like pattern between far-right extremist groups' age and violent behavior. Based on the above discussion, we pose the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a cyclical relationship between group age and violent behavior.

H2: There is a cyclical relationship between group age and groups' legal/political activities.

If the political authorities begin to take sides or favor the other, extremist groups would progress to the next stage in their lifecycle: *Crisis of Confidence*. Implementation of policies that protect the other or appear to be excessive can erode extremist groups' belief in the legitimacy of the prevailing government's authority (Cronin, 2006; Della Porta, 2012; Freilich, Chermak, & Caspi, 2009; Sprinzak, 1995). The extremist group would then become increasingly disillusioned about the government's commitment to protecting the legitimate community (i.e., the members of far-rightist groups). As a result, the extremist groups' criminal behavior would shift to deliberate disobedience of the law. Both hate crimes and crimes against the government would occur at this stage. One would also expect groups would be less likely to engage in legal/political behaviors, as they lose confidence in the regime's willingness to protect their legitimate constituencies.

Thus, according to Sprinzak (1995), the groups' stage of radicalization would influence its target selection. As group age and subsequent disillusionment with the government fluctuate, far-rightist groups' target selection would also change. Groups that were less disillusioned with the government – that is, in the *Conflict of Legitimacy* stage –

would target the other, while groups at the *Crisis of Confidence* stage would target both the government and other equally. Only in the final stages of group radicalization or *Crisis of Legitimacy* stage would the group engage in increasingly violent and frequent acts of terrorism (Sprinzak, 1995). In other words, younger groups would be more likely to commit hate crimes and assaults against the other, whereas older groups would be more likely to engage in terrorism.

Kaplan (1995), however, argued that Sprinzak (1995) underestimated the extent to which the government is identified as the other by the American far-right. Kaplan (1995) asserted that because of the strong belief in conspiracy theories⁵ that the government has been taken over by the hated other, one would not expect to observe split targeting of government and the other among American far-right groups. Kaplan (1995) argued that because American far-rightists make little distinction between the Zionist Occupation Government and the other, any attack against a government official or employee would be construed as a symbolic strike against the entire ZOG. Further, Kaplan (1995) argued that the American far-right considers the other to be lacking in intelligence, and subsequently, not a threat. Thus, hate crimes against Jews and minorities would be rare and the American far-rightists moved to violence would commit robberies, assassinations, and “propaganda by deed” to demonstrate the weaknesses of the system and bolster the spirits of the movement members (Kaplan, 1995). In other words, Kaplan (1995) predicted that because of American far-right’s belief in the ZOG, they would select government or symbolic governmental targets, that is, engage in terrorism, regardless of their age.

In a subsequent book, Kaplan (1997) analyzed the belief systems and violent behavior patterns of far-right religious groups in America. Although the far-right has committed many revolutionary violent acts (Freilich, Chermak, Belli, Gruenewald, & Parkin, 2014), Kaplan (1997) focused on The Order, one of the more infamous racist far-right revolutionary groups. Kaplan (1997, p. 170) concluded that the “right wing talks a better revolution than it is prepared to fight.” Further, Kaplan (1997) argued that because of the divisions within the movement and the absence of a strong leader, the American right wing movement would be unlikely to engage in terrorism in the future.⁶ Other researchers (Chermak et al., 2013; Freilich et al., 2014; Gruenewald & Pridemore, 2012; Kaplan, 1995) have also noted that political violence against government targets (i.e., terrorism) is a less frequent tactic of the far-right than low level intimidation against subgroups (i.e., hate crimes). Based on Sprinzak’s (1995) arguments and Kaplan’s (1997) findings, we pose the following hypotheses:

H3a: Younger groups will be more likely to select civilian target as opposed to government targets.

H3b: Older groups will be more likely to select government, as opposed to civilian targets.

The effects of disillusionment with group leadership on far-right groups’ violent and legal behavior patterns

Sprinzak (1995) and Kaplan (1995) agreed that far-right terrorist violence is rare phenomenon usually committed by splinter groups. Sprinzak (1995) hypothesized that far-right groups would splinter during the *Crisis of Confidence* stage when members lost confidence in their leadership’s ability to achieve the group’s goals. One possibility was that more extreme members were more likely to desert to splinter groups if they perceived the

leadership was too moderate and unable to realize the movement's goals (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011; Sprinzak, 1995). Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses were created:

H4: Groups should splinter when members perceived the leadership as not extreme enough. Therefore, groups that splinter should be more likely to engage in violent behavior, when compared to those that did not.

H5: Groups that splinter should be less likely to engage in legal/political activities, when compared to those that did not.

The effects of disillusionment with the ruling regime on far-right groups' violent and legal behavior patterns

Support was found for Sprinzak's (1995) second stage of group radicalization. Crenshaw (2012a) argued that government retaliation could result in increased acts of terrorism due to two reasons. Since members of extremist groups share intense kinship bonds, death or imprisonment of group members would inspire a need for revenge (Crenshaw, 2012a). Second, feelings of persecution would increase feelings of group solidarity, act as a confirmation of their beliefs, and ensure that the "cycle of vengeance" continues (Crenshaw, 2012a, p. 255). McCauley and Moskalenko (2008, 2011), in their analysis of individual, group, and mass level factors of radicalization, also found evidence that loss of group members and perception of persecution or unfair retaliation by the regime increased group solidarity and criminal behavior.

Loss of confidence in the government could be precipitated by more subtle factors. Changes in government policy could be perceived as an act of betrayal against the legitimate citizens. Willems (1995), who tested split delegitimization theory in Germany using individual level data, found that rather than personal experiences of loss or threats to status, the underlying cause of violence towards immigrants was the perception of unjust distribution of resources in favor of immigrants. Chermak et al. (2013) found that American far-right groups located in the West and Northeast were more likely to engage in violence, compared to groups in the South. Although macro factors, such as government policy, were not directly tested in Chermak's et al (2013) study, the observed differences in group violent behavior could have been due to the loss of status quo caused by the more liberal policies found in the West and Northeast. This is consistent with Sprinzak's (1995) argument that disillusionment caused by an unsympathetic regime and its policies could invoke perception of threat from the other and motivate a far-rightist group to turn to violence. Thus, we hypothesis that:

H6: groups that become disillusioned with the ruling regime would be more likely to engage in criminal behavior, compared to groups who are not disillusioned. This relationship should exist even after controlling for loss of confidence in the group leader.

H7: groups that become disillusioned with the ruling regime would be less likely to engage in legal/political behavior, compared to groups who are not disillusioned.

The effects of mutual delegitimization on far-right groups' violent and legal behavior patterns

Kaplan (1995) extended the causes of disillusionment (and subsequent violent behavior) to the experience of mutual delegitimization. According to Kaplan (1995, 1997), American far-right groups also encounter fierce delegitimization by the community, the media, and watch groups, such as Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) (see also Chermak, 2002; Freilich & Pridemore, 2006). Kaplan (1995) argued that two factors led to the delegitimization of the American far-right by conventional society: (1) ADL's use of its connections with Congress, government agencies, and the media to isolate the movement from conventional society by blocking access to television and radio and (2) the political correctness paradigm of the 1980s press campaign to influence the content of media. Kaplan (1995) argued, far-rightist organizations were denied a voice in the public sphere, which exacerbated their feelings of isolation and belief that the government is controlled by the ZOG. Kaplan (1995) concluded that this marginalization of far-rightist ideology in the public milieu would leave the group with two options: disband or engage in terrorism to publicize their views. Studies in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden did not find evidence of mutual delegitimization among far-rightists who engaged in hate crimes and violence against immigrants (Bjørge, 1995b; Lööw, 1995). Studies on the American far-right movement, however, found that members experienced delegitimization by the wider community, which increased extremists' levels of radicalization (Blee, 2002; Simi & Futrell, 2010; Wooden & Blazak, 2001). Thus, we hypothesize:

H8: Groups that experience mutual delegitimization by society or the government would feel more threatened and would be more likely to engage in violent behavior to restore the status

H9: Groups that experience mutual delegitimization by the community or government would be less likely to engage in legal/political activities

The crisis of confidence stage culminates with the disappearance of the split, and both the hated other and prevailing government authority is deemed delegitimate. As the group becomes convinced that the government is taken over by the other, it progresses to the crisis of legitimacy stage. According to Sprinzak (1995, p. 22), unlike universalistic terror groups (far-left or nationalistic organizations), particularistic terrorists like the far-right do not "need to undergo a profound psych-political transformation to become brutal killers," since the hated other is intrinsically inferior. Thus, for Sprinzak (1995), the far-right extremist group can engage in terrorism with a clear conscience (also see Crenshaw, 2000; Cronin, 2006 for discussion on split delegitimization theory).

H10: far-rightist groups are more likely to engage in terrorism if they experience mutual delegitimization by community/society. In other words, mutual delegitimization would influence target selection of far-rightist groups.

The effects of religion on far-right groups' violent behavior patterns

According to Kaplan (1995), Sprinzak (1995) underestimated the influence of religion on the American far-right. Kaplan (1995) argued that religious hate groups would be more violent than nonreligious hate groups. However, in a subsequent publication, Kaplan

(1997) found low incidences of violence by religious motivated far-right group. Instead, he found that many members of radical religious groups tended to withdraw from society (Kaplan, 1997). In contrast, Asal and Rethemeyer (2008) found that religious groups were more lethal than purely ethnonationalist, far-right, far-left, environmental and anarchist groups, which supported Kaplan's (1995) initial argument. Based on the conflicting findings, we pose the following research question:

Does group dominant ideology influence far-right groups' violent behavior patterns?

Research design

The sample selection process, as well as the dependent and independent variables used to assess split delegitimization theory, is described in this section. Finally, the statistical models used to analyze the data and the study's findings are presented.

Sampling design

There are few sources that systematically and regularly maintain listings of individual far-right hate groups. Since the study required a national sample of violent and nonviolent far-right extremist group, the SPLC *Intelligence Report* provided a strong starting point. Although scholars have noted problems with SPLC procedures for identifying hate incidents or groups (Chermak, 2002; Freilich & Pridemore, 2006), their data (and other watch-group data like the ADL's) have been used by scholars to study both social movement mobilization and political violence (Freilich, 2003; Freilich et al., 2014; Freilich & Pridemore, 2005; O'Brien & Haider-Markel, 1998; Van Dyke & Soule, 2002). The SPLC's *Intelligence Report*, and its predecessor *Klanwatch*, have used the same set of strategies to identify hate organizations over time, relying on "hate group publications and websites, citizen and law enforcement reports, field sources and news reports" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2012). Unlike law enforcement agencies and others that compile intelligence information only on criminally active groups, the SPLC tracks violent and nonviolent groups. Significantly, the SPLC specifically excludes websites that are the work of a lone person not affiliated with a group.

The SPLC's annual reports listed over 6000 hate groups that were active during 1990 and 2008. The front end cut-off of 1990 was selected because of concerns about the reliability of information prior to this period. A back-end cut-off of 2008 was selected to ensure there was adequate time to identify violence related information.⁷ Because of the study's interest in examining variations in the legal/nonviolent and criminal/violent behavior patterns of far-right extremist groups over time, only groups that were active for three or more years were included in the sample. Of the 6000 hate groups listed by the SPLC's annual reports, 550 satisfied these criteria. A random sample of 30 violent and 30 nonviolent far-right extremist groups were then selected from the list of 550 groups.

Next, a search protocol was designed to obtain information on organizational level data about the main chapter of each group, identified from SPLC's annual reports in the previous stage. Keywords such as the name of the group, group members, and location of violent incidents were used to search over 30 web-engines, including Lexis-Nexis, WestLaw, Google, and All the Web. Watch-group organizations, such as SPLC, ADL, and Human Rights Watch were also searched. All the public source documents, including court documents, indictments, news documents, press releases from law enforcement agencies, and movement produced information (such as personal statements made by

group leaders) were organized into a search file and coded into an ACCESS file according to the MAROB protocol.⁸ Group level characteristics were coded for each year that a group was in existence (e.g., a group that was in existence for 20 years would be coded as 20 case entries, with group and year identifiers). Finally, these data were cleaned and verified. To avoid truncated data, measures were taken of the sampled groups for each year of existence before 1990.

Variables

The sample consisted of 30 violent far-rightist and 30 nonviolent far-rightist groups, but groups' were coded for each year of their existence ($N = 1135$), which covered the period 1955 to 2008. Thus, the unit of analysis is active or group years for each far-right extremist group sampled. The study had three dependent variables: violent behavior, target selection, and legal/political behavior. Violent behavior was operationalized as a dichotomous variable, with 1 meaning that group members committed at least one violent crime that year. To capture Sprinzak's conceptualization of far-right violent behavior, only ideology motivated violent crimes, such as a beating by group members, bombing, or murder were included in the analysis. Group violent behavior was then further analyzed based on the target selected. Nonviolent groups were coded as "0," groups that targeted government personnel at least once in that year were coded as "1" and those that only targeted civilians were coded as "2." Legal/political behavior of group was operationalized as a composite measure, consisting of whether the group engaged in lobbying activities, provided social services, engaged in political activities, or participated in a nonviolent protest. Groups that engaged in at least one legal/political activity a year were coded as "1" and those that did not participate in legal/political activities were coded as "0."

The independent variables included in the study are group age, group dominant ideology, disillusionment with the government, mutual delegitimization, and group disillusionment with the leader. Group age was measured as a continuous variable; however, to be consistent with previous studies, groups were considered to be "young" in their first 5 years of existence, "middle aged" between the age of 6 to 10 years, and "old" after 10 years of existence (Chermak et al., 2013). To capture Kaplan's critique of Sprinzak's lack of attention to the influence of religion to the American far-right movement, group dominant ideology was coded as hate/bias related, antigovernment, profit motivated, and religious. Hate groups with no religious component were placed in the "hate/bias" related category, while groups with both hate and religious elements were placed in the "religious" category. This design is consistent with previous research that examined the influence of religion and ethnic bias of groups on lethal group behaviors (See Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008).

It was difficult to create a measure to capture group disillusionment with the ruling regime. As American far-right groups are legal organizations, no cases of government persecution at the group level or state use of violence against the group was present. Further, the use of RICO or other charges filed against the group would likely be highly correlated with two dependent variables, violent behaviour, and target selected. Sprinzak (1995, p. 19) hypothesized that as groups would become increasingly critical of the ruling regime, their verbal dissent would become increasingly inflammatory. Therefore, group leaders' justification or call for violence was used as a proxy variable to capture groups' disillusionment with the ruling regime.

Another proxy variable, civil charges filed against the group, was used to measure mutual delegitimization. Finally, the group's decision to splinter was used as a proxy measure for group disillusionment with the leader. The codebook is listed in Table 1, and

Table 1. Description of variables.

Variables	Values	Description
<i>Dependent variables</i>		
Violence	0 = no violent acts committed that year 1 = at least one violent act committed that year	Violence is defined as ideological violence (e.g., beating, bombing, or murder) which resulted in legal charges
Target of violence	0 = No target; did not engage in violence 1 = targeted government personnel at least once 2 = targeted civilians	If the group engaged in violence that year, specify the target. <i>This was also used as an independent variable in the model assessing legal behavior of groups</i>
Legal/political behavior	0 = did not engage in legal/political behavior 1 = engaged in at least 1 act of legal/political behavior	Did the group engage in lobbying activities, provided social services, engage in political activities or participate in a nonviolent protest at least once that year? <i>This was also used as an independent variable in the model assessing violent behavior of groups</i>
<i>Independent variables</i>		
Age of group	Continuous variable	What was the age of the group at the time of the violent and/or legal behavior?
Group ideology	1 = Hate/bias related, no religious component 2 = Primarily antigovernment 3 = Primarily profit motivated 4 = Primarily religious, may have hate/bias as secondary belief	What was the dominant ideology of the group at the time of the violent or legal behavior?
Disillusionment with ruling regime	0 = Leaders don't justify violence 1 = Leaders justify violence	Did organizational leaders justify violence in public statements?
Mutual delegitimization	0 = No civil charges 1 = Civil charges filed against group	Did the government, victim, private party or watchgroup file civil charges against the group that year?
Group disillusionment with leader	0 = Group did not splinter 1 = Group splintered	Did the group splinter that year?

Table 2. Summary of variables.

Variables	Frequency	Per cent	Mean	SD
Dependent variables				
Violence				
At least 1 per year	162	14.3		
No incidents	973	85.7		
Target of violence				
No target	973	85.7		
At least 1 government target	10	10		
At least 1 Civilian target	152	13.3		
Legal/political behavior				
At least 1 legal/political act	249	21.9		
No legal/political acts	886	78.1		
Independent variables				
Age of group			13.71	10.936
Hate/Bias			11.35	9.011
Antigovernment			16.74	12.454
Religious			17.25	12.271
Profit			26.82	13.179
Group ideology				
Hate/Bias related	723	63.7		
Antigovernment	125	11.0		
Profit	33	2.9		
Religious	254	22.4		
Disillusionment with ruling regime				
Leaders justify violence	185	16.3		
Leaders don't justify violence	950	83.7		
Target of violence				
No target	970	85.5		
At least 1 government target	10	10		
At least 1 Civilian target	155	13.7		
Mutual delegitimization				
Civil charges filed	10	0.9		
No civil charges against group	1125	99.1		
Legal/political behavior				
At least 1 legal activity	249	21.9		
No legal activity	886	78.1		
Group disillusionment with leader				
Group splintered	11	1		
Group did not splinter	1124	99		

Note: $N = 1135$ (30 violent groups and 30 nonviolent groups measured for each year of existence).

descriptive statistics for these variables are listed in Table 2. The youngest group in the study was 3 years; the oldest existed for 54 years. Groups were more likely to engage in legal behavior ($N = 249$), when compared to violent behavior ($N = 162$).

Analysis

This study assessed three research questions: (1) Does the experience of split delegitimization influence the violent behavior of American far-rightist groups? (2) Does the

experience of split delegitimization influence the legal/political behavior of American far-rightist groups? (3) Does the experience of split delegitimization influence the target selection of violent far-rightist groups? Logistic models were used to analyze the effects of the independent variables on groups' violent and criminal behavior.⁹ All the assumptions for logistic models were fulfilled: the dependent variable is dichotomous, cell counts were adequate, and there was no complete split of the data. In addition, the residuals for both models were normally distributed, which indicated that errors were not serially correlated. Therefore, multiple measures for groups over time did not pose a problem for the selected statistical test.

Target selection was operationalized as a nominal variable. Usually multinomial regression models are recommended to analyze the effects of multiple independent variables on a nominal dependent variable (Field, 2009). However, since groups rarely selected government targets, cell counts were too low to generate unbiased statistics from a multinomial regression model. Chi square tests were used instead.

Findings

Group violent behavior¹⁰ and legal behavior tended to fluctuate with group age, which supported hypotheses 1 and 2, respectively. Younger groups were more likely to select civilian targets than older groups, which supported hypothesis 3a. However, contrary to Sprinzak's (1995) argument, older groups were not more likely to select government targets. Thus, no evidence was found for hypothesis 3b and Sprinzak's (1995) crisis of legitimacy stage. The trigger for group violent behavior appeared to be disillusionment with the ruling regime, which supported hypothesis 6.

Ideological violence by far-right extremist groups was rare, which supported Kaplan's (1997) description of the offending patterns of the American far-right. As hypothesized by Sprinzak (1995), age of group had a cyclical relationship with group violent behavior: group violent behavior tended to fluctuate with time. However, the size of the data-set did not support inferential tests to determine if this relationship was significant. The relationship between group age and violent behavior is depicted in Figure 1. Since violent behavior was coded as "1 = at least one violent crime by a far-right group," an observation of six civilian targets should be interpreted as: 6 groups committed *at least* one violent crime against civilian targets during that year.

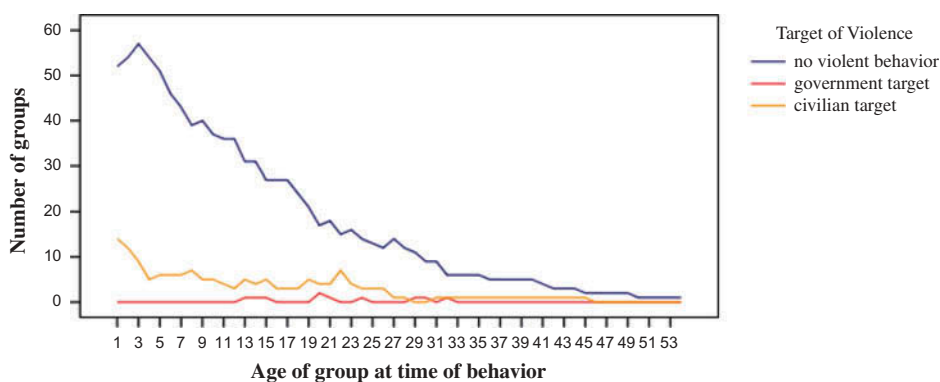


Figure 1. Changes in groups' violent behavior over time.

With reference to target selection, American far-right groups rarely selected government targets ($N = 10$). Instead, the far-right groups sampled were more likely to target civilians ($N = 152$). Thus, far-right groups target selection did not support Kaplan's (1995) argument that because of American far-rightists strong belief of antigovernment conspiracy theories, they would select government targets more frequently than Sprinzak (1995) predicted. Instead, the results conformed to Sprinzak's model: groups' violent behavior tended to fluctuate with time. There was evidence of split targeting for the first 30 years of groups' lifecycle when they tended to target nongovernment personnel. Further, the split disappeared after approximately 30 years when groups tended to target government and civilians in equal frequency.

The models assessing the influence of the independent variables on far-right groups' violent behavior are depicted in Table 3, which illustrates counts of violent behavior committed by the far-rightist groups sampled.¹¹ Independent variables were entered in a stepwise progression to determine the incremental effects of each IV on violent behavior of far-right groups. The strongest model was model 2 (Naglekerke $R^2 = .22$), which consisted of group age, dominant ideology, and group disillusionment with the ruling regime. Model 2 correctly classified 87.6% of the data. Mutual delegitimization, group legal behavior and group disillusionment with the leadership did not improve the predictive power of the model, that is, those variables were not significant predictors of group violent behavior.

Group disillusionment with the ruling regime significantly increased the likelihood that groups would engage in violent behavior. Group violent behavior patterns were also

Table 3. Models for violent criminal behavior of American far-right extremist groups.

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Age of group	0.007	-0.003	-0.003	-0.003	-0.003
Group ideology					
Hate/Bias related [†]	—	—	—	—	—
Antigovernment	—	-3.140**	-3.137**	-3.169**	-3.153**
Profit	—	3.221***	3.225***	3.230***	3.250***
Religious	—	-1.771***	-1.768***	-1.742***	-1.729***
Disillusionment with regime					
Leaders justify violence	—	0.541*	0.539*	0.527*	0.536*
Mutual delegitimization					
Civil action	—	—	0.213	0.197	0.209
Legal/political behavior	—	—	—	0.146	0.144
Disillusionment with leader					
Group splintered	—	—	—	—	0.656
Constant	-1.890	-1.637***	-1.639***	-1.675***	-1.684***
Chi Square	0.0829	149.093***	149.160***	149.600***	150.421***
-2Log	929.623	781.359	781.292	780.852	780.031
Cox and Snell R Square	0.001	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.124
Naglekerke R Square	0.001	0.220	0.220	0.221	0.222
Hosmer and Leneshow Test	13.073	17.799*	16.655*	22.619**	22.875**
Correct classifications	85.7%	87.6%	87.6%	87.6%	87.6 %

Notes: A review of the standardized residuals, Cook's Distance, and DFBeta revealed that there was one influential case or outlier. Less than 1% of residuals exceed $2.5SD$; the assumption of independent observations was fulfilled. Tolerance is greater than 0.1 and VIF values do not exceed 10, so there is no issue of collinearity between the variables. When age of group is removed from model 2, the strength of the model and coefficients remain relatively unchanged, but the residuals are better behaved. [†]Hate/Bias related is the reference category.

*, **, and ***Denote significant at 0.05, 0.01, and 0.001 levels, respectively.

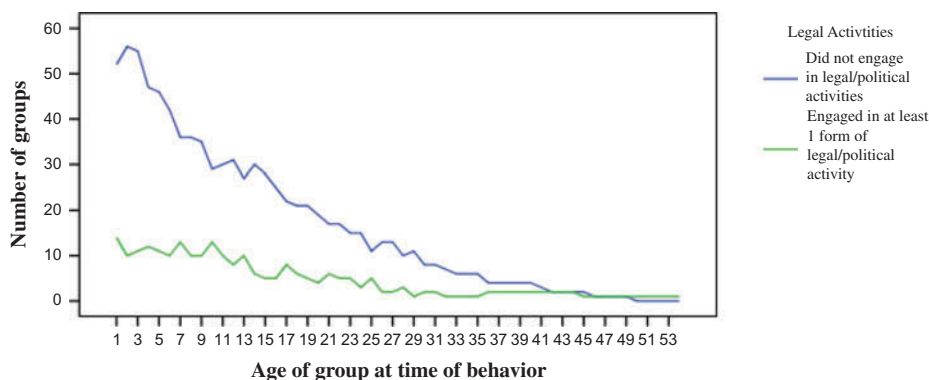


Figure 2. Changes in groups' legal behavior over time.

influenced by the group's dominant ideology. Specifically, far-right groups whose dominant ideology was religious, or a combination of hate and religious, were significantly less likely than nonreligious bias groups to engage in violent behavior. This contradicted Kaplan's (1995) critique of split delegitimization theory, but conformed to his subsequent work on radical religion (Kaplan, 1997). Antigovernment groups were also less likely than nonreligious bias groups to engage in violent behavior. Surprisingly, profit motivated far-right groups – those motivated by a combination of greed and bias – were more likely to engage in violent behavior, compared to nonreligious bias groups. Thus, it appears that far-right groups motivated by a combination of greed and bias demonstrate similar offending patterns as profit motivated gangs. However, further analysis is required to make any conclusive statement about the similarity between these two seemingly diverse groups.

Groups' legal behavior tended to fluctuate with group age. Group legal behavior followed a downward slope for approximately 30 years, which suggested that as groups become more disillusioned with the ruling regime and experienced mutual delegitimization by the community, they were less likely to engage in legal activities to promote their ideological goals. Groups' legal behavior over time is depicted in Figure 2.

Independent variables were entered in a stepwise progression to determine the incremental effects of each IV on legal behavior of far-right groups. These models are depicted in Table 4. Dominant ideology had the strongest influence on groups' legal behavior. Antigovernment groups were significantly more likely to engage in legal behaviors, when compared to nonreligious bias groups. However, religious bias groups were significantly less likely to engage in legal behaviors, when compared to nonreligious bias groups. The strongest model predicting legal behavior of far-right groups was model 2 (Naglekerke $R^2 = .10$), which consisted of group age, dominant ideology, and group disillusionment with the ruling regime. Model 2 correctly classified 78.4% of the data. Although few of the tenets of split delegitimization theory were supported with regard to legal behavior of far-right groups, group dominant ideology was found to be a strong predictor of groups' legal behavior.

Discussion

This study empirically tested Sprinzak's (1995) theory of split delegitimization using a sample of American far-right groups. Unlike universalistic terror groups, Sprinzak (1995) noted that far-right groups tended to select nongovernment targets and commit fewer acts

Table 4. Models for legal behavior of American far-right extremist groups.

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Age of group	0.018**	0.027***	0.027***	0.026***	0.026***
Group ideology					
Race/hate related [†]		—	—	—	—
Antigovernment		0.783***	0.828***	0.839***	0.841***
Profit		-0.746	-0.662	-0.642	-0.638
Religious		-1.462***	-1.436***	-1.429***	-1.427***
Disillusionment with regime					
Leaders justify violence		0.021	0.006	0.001	0.002
Target of violence					
No target		—	-0.218	-0.215	-0.214
At least 1 government		—	-20.209	-20.204	-20.203
Civilian target [‡]		—	—	—	—
Mutual delegitimization					
Civil action		—	—	0.731	0.733
Disillusionment with leader					
Group splintered		—	—	—	0.108
Constant	-1.526	-1.507***	1.321***	-1.329***	-1.331
Chi Square	7.984**	79.892***	86.249***	87.406***	87.431***
-2Log	1186.323	1114.414	1108.058	1106.940	1106.876
Cox and Snell R Square	.007	.068	0.073	0.074	0.074
Naglekerke R Square	.011	.104	0.112	0.114	0.114
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test	9.682	34.432***	42.126***	38.940***	44.808***
Correct predictions	78.1%	78.4%	78.4%	78.3%	78.3%

Notes: A review of the standardized residuals, Cook's Distance, and DFBeta revealed that there was one influential case or outlier. Less than 1% of residuals exceed 2.5SD: the assumption of independent observations was fulfilled. Tolerance is greater than 0.1 and VIF values did not exceed 10: there is no issue of collinearity between the variables. [†]Hate/Bias related is the reference category. [‡]Civilian target is the reference category. ** and ***Denote significant at 0.01 and 0.001 levels, respectively.

of terrorism. Sprinzak (1995) hypothesized that far-right groups undergo a radicalization process through three stages: *conflict of legitimacy*, *crisis of confidence*, and *crisis of legitimacy*. Groups initially engage in legal behaviors to bolster existing socio-legal-economic structures of discrimination. Violent actions against the hated other, minority group members, occur if groups feel threatened. Groups target the ruling authority to a lesser extent, unless they experience a profound sense of disillusion with the ruling authority and mutual delegitimization by the population.

Far-right groups exhibited a *conflict of legitimacy* stage, in which they initially engaged in legal activities. However, about 10%–15% of far-right groups sampled also engaged in violent behavior during the first 20 years of their existence. After 20 years, the percentage of groups that engaged in violent behavior increased to 20–30%, but this dropped as groups aged. Further, since disillusionment with the ruling regime significantly increased the likelihood that groups would engage in violent behavior, the onset of violence appears to be caused by perceptions of threat to the group, which supported Sprinzak's (1995) model.

Some support was obtained for Sprinzak's *crisis of confidence* stage; disillusionment with the ruling regime significantly increased the likelihood of violent behavior. However,

group disillusionment with the leadership and decision to splinter had no influence on subsequent violent behavior. Support was found for split targeting during the first 30 years of far-right groups operations, which was consistent with Sprinzak's (1995) theory. The study also found evidence that the split tended to disappear over time, as older groups tended to select both civilian and government targets with equal frequency.

Finally, American far-right groups did not exhibit a *Crisis of Legitimacy* stage. That is, American far-right groups included in the sample initially committed violent crimes against nongovernment targets, with fewer acts against government targets. In addition, there was no pattern of escalation against government targets: older groups selected both civilian and government targets equally. Target selection was not influenced by disillusionment with the ruling regime, disillusionment with the group's leadership, or mutual delegitimization. The sole variable that influenced target selection was group dominant ideology, which suggested that group factors are a more reliable determinant of target selection than macro-level factors.

The absence of evidence supporting the *Crisis of Legitimacy* stage suggested that American far-right groups have yet to meet the peak of their radicalization. Instead, groups move between the *conflict of legitimacy* and *crisis of confidence* stages – fluctuating between split targeting or equally select government and nongovernment target – without resorting to a prolonged period of escalating terrorism. It is possible that consistent and reasonable law enforcement reaction to far-right groups' violent behavior could have prevented groups from reaching the peak of the radicalization trajectory (Chermak, 2002; Merkl, 1995; Welsh, 1995; Willems, 1995). Another possible explanation is that Bjørge's (1995b) analysis of split delegitimization theory in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden is similar to the American experience: American far right groups have reached the peak of radicalization, but desist from terrorism because of tactical considerations and lack of organizational capacity.

Split delegitimization provided a better conceptual model to analyze far-right groups' violent behavior, when compared to their legal behavior. Thus, Sprinzak accomplished his goal: to assist researchers in analyzing the violent behavior patterns of far-right groups and to provide an explanation for their split targeting. Kaplan's (1995) prediction that there would be an absence of split targeting and the American far-right movement would display similar offending patterns as the Japanese and Scandinavian movements was not supported. Unlike the Japanese (Szymkowiak & Steinhoff, 1995), South African (Welsh, 1995), and Scandinavian (Bjørge, 1995b) far-right, the hated other was the preferred target of American far-right groups. Sprinzak's (1995) model of intense delegitimization and targeting of nongovernmental minorities, with a less intense delegitimization and targeting of the ruling regime held true for the American far-right, which tended to select government targets and rarely engaged in more traditional forms of terrorism. Thus, Sprinzak's (1995) conceptual model was supported.

Although Kaplan's (1995) comment about the significance of religion was supported, the direction of the impact of religion was inaccurate: religious bias groups were less likely than nonreligious bias groups to engage in violent behavior. Researchers have found that influence on religion increases lethality of extremist groups (Asal & Rethemeyer, 2008; Asal et al., 2009), which makes the American far-right unique and highlights the importance of country-specific and ideology-specific anticrime and anti-terrorism policies. Another unique aspect of the far-right is those who engage in criminal and terroristic behaviors tend to have low SES backgrounds or experience status frustrations and have less opportunities for success than far-left, nationalist or radical Islamic

movements (Ezekiel, 1995; Gruenewald, Chermak, & Freilich, 2013; Smith, 1994; Willems, 1995; Wooden & Blazak, 2001).

Even within the far-right movement, country-level differences in demographic factors exist, for example, the South African far-right movement tends to draw members from higher SES groups (Welsh, 1995). As a result, at the end of apartheid, the movement was deterred from terrorism at the crisis of legitimacy stage by the ruling regime's willingness to use force, as this increased the group members' risk of death, loss of status, and earnings (see Welsh, 1995). Similarly, the Japanese far-right has considerably more financial resources than the American far-right, maintains ties to organized crime, and enjoys political protection while simultaneously recruiting from a pool of disadvantaged youths competing with immigrant labor for unskilled jobs (Szymkowiak & Steinhoof, 1995). Therefore, antiterrorism policies would need to be country-specific and consider the demographic factors of the group, the potential risks to the group from engaging in terrorism, and the organization's capacity to engage in terrorism.

Anticrime and antiterrorism policies to reduce violence among the American far-right movement should include attempts to reduce the disillusionment experienced by the group as a result of government policy. Although the link between democracy and criminal behavior among extremists remains uncertain, inclusion in the political process might reduce criminality among far-right groups (Duffy & Brantely, 1997; Freilich & Chermak, 2009; Freilich, Chermak, & Caspi, 2009; Newman & Clarke, 2008; Welsh, 1995). Although others have suggested that inclusion in the political process might be unsuccessful in deterring violence among extremist groups at the peak of the radicalization process, especially those who have lost comrades in previous altercations with the ruling regime (Crenshaw, 2012b),¹² Welsh's analysis of right-wing extremist violence in South Africa at the end of apartheid provides valuable insight into how commitment to the group can be overcome by personal considerations. Welsh (1995) suggested that in addition to inclusion in the political process, key group or movement leaders must be open to compromise, the ruling regime needs to be willing to take action if the group engages in mass violence, and the compromise must be perceived as beneficial to individual group members (e.g., loss of pension or death). Thus, consistent and reasonable government response to right-wing extremist groups (Chermak, 2002; Merkl, 1995; Welsh, 1995; Willems, 1995) and provision of legal avenues for the groups to air their grievances (Bjørgo, 1995b; Kaplan, 1995) are crucial in minimizing feelings of disillusionment experienced by extremist groups.

This study focused on violent behavior of far-rightists at the group level. At the individual level, other researchers have noted the prevalence of criminal history records amongst movement members (Bjørgo, 1995b; Freilich et al., 2014; in press; Willems, 1995), especially among the less ideological skinheads (Bjørgo, 1995b). It is possible that some of the violent behavior patterns and prevalence of nongovernment target are due to selection effects in the movement: people with a preponderance of definitions favorable to violent behavior may actively seek participation in the movement to find an external element to blame or provide a deeper meaning for their inclinations (Bjørgo, 1995a; Ezekiel, 1995). Selection effects from deliberate recruitment among inmates (ADL, 2002; Blazak, 2009) could also influence patterns of violent behavior observed at the group level. Consequently, nonideological factors may have more influence on criminal behavior observed at the group level than ideological factors such as disillusionment with the leadership and mutual delegitimization.

Limitations of this study included the risk of type II error because of the use of proxies (disillusionment with the ruling regime, mutual delegitimization, and disillusionment with the leadership) and an unbalanced design (i.e., the sample consisted of many younger

groups and fewer old groups). Thus, the study might have underestimated or not identified the significance of ideological concerns to the violent behavior patterns of American far-right groups. A balanced design, in which groups are organized into panels based on their age and analyzed with a mixed effects model, might unearth significant relationships not identified in the current study. Nested models might also prove useful to assess the importance of individual, group, and national-level factors.

The greater likelihood of violent behavior by profit motivated far-right groups as compared to nonreligious bias groups highlights the importance of the nexus of extremism and ordinary criminality found in previous studies on the far-right (Belli, 2011; Szymkowiak & Steinhoff, 1995; Willems, 1995). The effects of regular criminality on far-rightist violent behavior should be explored in the future. Future studies may wish to compare criminal behavior patterns of nonideological gangs and extremist groups to tease out the relationship between extremism and ordinary criminality.

Funding

This research was funded by the Science and Technology Directorate, US Department of Homeland Security, through a grant to the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), based at the University of Maryland (Award No. 2009ST108LR0003). The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily representing the official policies, either expressed or implied, of the US Department of Homeland Security or START.

Notes

1. Freilich, Chermak and Caspi (2009, p. 499) define the ideology the far-right movement as: “fiercely nationalistic (as opposed to universal and international in orientation), antiglobal, suspicious of centralized federal authority, reverent of individual liberty (especially their right to own guns, be free of taxes), believe in conspiracy theories that involve a grave threat to national sovereignty, and/or personal liberty, believe that one’s personal and/or national ‘way of life’ is under attack and is either already lost or that the threat is imminent (sometimes such beliefs are amorphous and vague, but for some the threat is from a specific ethnic, racial, or religious group), and believe in the need to be prepared for an attack by participating in paramilitary preparations, training and survivalism.”
2. A search of JSTOR and EBSCO Host identified no empirical studies of split delegitimization theory on the American far-right.
3. Split delegitimization, according to Sprinzak (1995), can be used to explain the radicalization of particularistic terror organizations, such as far-right extremist groups. He argued that universalistic terror groups, such as nationalist and radical left-wing movements, follow a different radicalization process (*Crisis of Confidence*, *Conflict of Legitimacy*, and *Crisis of Legitimacy*), whereby the subject of delegitimization is the ruling political regime. See Sprinzak (1991, 1995).
4. The ECDB is divided into three databases: The violence database contains homicides and violent plots/incidents committed by extremists (see Gruenewald & Pridemore, 2012 for detailed description); the financial database contains financial schemes and material support crimes committed by extremists (See Belli, 2011); and the groups database contains violent and nonviolent extremist groups (see Chermak et al., 2013).
5. Also see Chermak (2002) for details of commonly held conspiracy theories by the far-right that includes the Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG), Jewish Occupation Government (JOG), and a UN conspiracy to isolate Anglo-Saxon Americans.
6. Kaplan (1997) based this line of reasoning on the proactive action of the FBI during the 1990s. Kaplan (1997) argued that if a strong leader arose in the American far right, the FBI would move to neutralize the individual, for example, via criminal charges for preparatory crimes.
7. See Chermak et al. (2013) for detailed description of how the ECDB group database was created.
8. See Asal and Wilkenfeld (2013) for a more detailed explanation of the MAROB protocol.

9. Since the first two models consisted of a dichotomous dependent variable, multiple independent variables and time element, a fixed effects model, or mixed model might have been appropriate. Fixed models uses each group as its own control and time cannot be entered as an independent variable. Therefore, fixed models would not have been appropriate for the study. Mixed models allow for the inclusion of time, but this statistical technique requires that the data to be organized into panels. When the data-set was organized to capture group behavior from 1–5 years, 6–10 years, and 10 plus years, the sample size was reduced to less than 200. As a result, the mixed models did not converge. We decided to use logistic models, which was the simplest model that fit the data. All the assumptions for logistic models were fulfilled. Since the errors were normally distributed, independent observations can be assumed. Graphs of the predicted and observed probabilities revealed an absence of complete split of the data. Finally, cell counts were adequate for logistic models.
10. Mixed effects (GEE) models were used to determine if age is a significant predictor of violent or legal behavior for each individual group. This type of analysis would use each group as its own baseline. Unfortunately, since few of the groups sampled existed for 20+ years, we have an unbalanced design (a larger N for young and middle-aged groups and a small N for old groups), which prevented the mixed regression models from converging. Thus, we did not present the biased results from the mixed effects regression models and instead choose to present logistic regression models, which provided unbiased results of the effects of age on aggregated groups' violent behavior.
11. Since group violent behavior had a cyclical relationship with group age, the results depicted in the logistic model in [Table 3](#) was nonsignificant. Logistic models can identify associations between categorical variables and liner relationships with continuous variables. Consequently, line graphs were used to uncover the offending patterns of far-right groups over time.
12. While Crenshaw (2012b) recognized that feelings of group solidarity, commitment, guilt, loyalty, and the need for revenge could prevent extremist groups from accepting a compromise, she argues that a lack of choice or legal avenues to inspire political change is crucial to extremist groups' initial decision to engage in terrorism.

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Appendix – List of American far right groups sampled.

Aryan nations	Crusade against corruption
National Alliance	East Coast Hate Crew
Church of the Creator/World Church of the Creator/ The Creativity Movement	Aryan Alliance
Aryan Brotherhood	United Bulldog Skins
National Socialist Front	Stone Kingdom Ministries
National Organization for European American Rights/European American Unity and Rights Organization	American Third Position
White Revolution	American White Separatist
American Skins	Buffalo Rochester Aryan Skinheads
Keystone State Skinheads	White American Political Association/White Aryan Resistance/The Insurgent
LaPorte Church of Christ	The Hated
Asatru Folk Assembly	Sigrdrifa
Committee to Restore the Constitution	Missouri White Militia
National Association for the Advancement of White People	Aryan Racial Loyalist Party/United Fascist Union
Westboro Baptist Church	Haken Kreuz
Kinsmen's Comitatus	SS Regalia
Sacramanians	Aryan National Front
Sacto Skinheads	Gospel of the Kingdom's Mission
VDare	Power of Prophecy
Imperial Klans of America	Virginia Publishing Company
American Thule Society	Christian Fellowship Ministries
Association of the Covenant People	Hypatia Publishing
Final Stand Records	Micetrap Distribution
United Klans of America	European American Heritage Foundation
Volksfront	American Renaissance New Century Foundation
Army of God	Posse Comitatus
Southern League/League of the South	National Socialist Skinheads
Southeast Boot Boys	SS Action Group
Skinhead Dogs	Confederate Society of America
Institute for Historical Review	Malicious Oi Boys
Doc Martens Skinheads	Kingdom Identity Ministries